

TREATMENT FOR CONSUMPTIVES.

The following valuable remarks on the treatment for Consumptives people are from the pen of Mr. N. P. Willis, the popular American writer. They show, in as far as his testimony goes, that those who live in the Country, lead an active and vigorous life and breathing plenty of fresh and pure air, have little to fear from this so much dreaded disease, while other similar testimony has shown that even those who were supposed to be far advanced in Consumption, have recovered their health by accustoming themselves gradually to out door exercise in the open Country, together with observing regular hours, paying a proper regard to diet &c.

After premising, among other things, that "the patient who troubles himself the least about his disease, (or who leaves it entirely to his doctor,) but who perseveringly out votes it by the high condition of the other parts of his system, is the likeliest to recover?"—that two persons are seldom the subjects for precisely the same medical treatment, or diseased in precisely the same locality—that our friends, the physicians, are better geographers than we, as to where the healing is wanted—though they too often take for granted that the patient keeps the rest of his body in proper training for recovery—Mr. WILLIS continues: "I went to the Tropics, as a last hope, to cure a chronic cough and blood raising, which had brought me to the borders of the grave. I found a climate in which it is hard to be unhappy about anything—chaining to live at—easy to die. (At least those who were sure dying, and did die, and in whose inseparable company I thought I was, were social and joyous the last.) The atmosphere of that Eden-latitude, however is but a painstifling opiate, while the equator might be called a kitchen-range for *Sardanapalus*, and the Antilles are but tables dèluxe with luxuries. The Caribbean sea is the kingdom of the moment. The past and the future of the Arctic and Antarctic—unthought of except by desperate explorers. Hither are sent invalids, with weakened resolution, to make a pilgrimage of prescription and prudence. You may see in the book I have just published, (*Health Trip to the Tropics*.) with what complete forgetfulness care or caution I made one of an invalid company for months.

Was anybody going to shut me up in a bedroom with such nights out of doors? Was anybody going to be dull and abstinent with such gay people, and a French breakfast or tempting dinner on the table?

I reached home in July, thoroughly prostrated in the opinion of one or two physicians, a helpless case. Coughing almost the whole of my night, and raising blood as fast as my system could make it. I had no rest and no strength. I suffered through the summer, and as the autumn season, and the winter was to be faced, I sat down and took a fair look at the probabilities. I then turned to the details of this troubled council of war

I will not detain you; but, after an unflinching self-examination, I came to the conclusion that I was, myself the careless and indolent neutralizer of the medicines which had failed to cure me—that one wrong morsel of food, or one day's partially neglected exercise, might put back a week's healing—and that, by slight omissions of attention, occasional breaking of regimen, and much too effeminate habits; I was untrue to the trust which Gray, my friend and physician, had made the ground of his prescriptions.—And to a minutely persevering change in the comparative trifles, I owe, I believe, my restoration to health. There was not a day of the succeeding winter, however cold or wet, in which I did not ride eight or ten miles on horseback. With five or six men, I was for most of the remaining hours of the day, out of doors, laboring at the roads and clearings of my present home, The cottage of Idlewild was then unbuilt, and the neighboring farm-house, where we boarded, was of course indifferently warmed; but by suffering no state of the thermometer to interrupt the morning cold bath, and the previous friction with flesh-brushes, which makes the water as agreeable as in summer, I soon became comparatively independent of the temperature in doors, as my horse and axe made me independent of it when out of doors. With proper clothing to resist cold or wet, I found, to my surprise, that there was no such thing as disagreeable weather to be felt in the saddle; and when a drive in a wagon or carriage would have intolerably irritated my cough, I could be all day in the woods with an axe, my lungs as quiet as a child's.

"There are so few invalids who are invariably and conscientiously *untemperable* by those deadly domestic enemies, *sweetmeats, pastry and gravies*, that the usual civilities at a meal are very like being politely assisted to the grave. The care and nature of the *skin* is a matter worth some studying; for it is capable not only of being negatively healthy, but positively luxurious in its actions and sensations—as every well groomed horse knows better than most men. The American liver has a hard struggle against the greasy cookery of our happy country. The impoverished blood of the invalid sometimes requires a "glass of wine for one's stomach's sake," recommended by the Apostle. Just sleep enough, and just clothing enough, are important adjustments, requiring more thought and care than are usually given to them. For a little philosophy in your habitual posture as you sit in your chair, your lungs would be very much obliged to you. An analysis of the air we live and sleep in, would be well worth looking into occasionally. And there are two things that turn sour in a man without constant and sufficient occupation upon something besides the domestic circle—the temper and the ambition."

Mr. W. expresses the fear that he cannot sufficiently convey to his correspondent his own sense of the importance of a *horse* to an invalid. "In my well weighed opinion," says Mr. W., "ten miles a day in the saddle, would cure more desperate cases (particularly of consumption,) than all the changes of climate and all the medicine in the world."